

Quick Strokes

Single copy \$1.25

In California \$1.33



Issued four times a year, June, September, December and March. This is No. 2 of Vol. VII, Whole Number 22. SUMMER, 1979

Barbara Blackburn will demonstrate at Dvorak International Federation First Annual Meeting, Wilsonville, Oregon, November 16, 1979

By telephone from Thurman J. Clark

The Holiday Inn at Wilsonville, Oregon, will be the place and November 16, 1979, the date for the first Annual Meeting of the Dvorak International Federation. The day will start with a breakfast at the inn at 7 a.m., and the exhibit hall will close at 9.

Barbara Blackburn, world's fastest secretary, of Everett, Washington, will demonstrate her proficiency.

Some sessions will be open to non-members of the Dvorak International Federation. Inquiries should be addressed to Thurman J. Clark, president, DIF, Oregon Public Employees Retirement System, 1221 S.W. Yamhill St., Portland, Oregon 97205. Telephone 503-229-5824.

DIF is making a special effort to draw attendance from the widespread community of longtime users or operators of any variant of the Dvorak arrangement for characters on alphanumeric keyboards. Quick Strokes, too, is hopeful that at least a few of the enthusiastic oldtimers will appear. Any accounts that they can give of their own experience would be enlightening to the newer comers, and accounts of the Oregon experience will gladden the hearts of the faithful.

Blackburn in Guinness again

The page number in the New! 1979 Edition of the *Guinness Book of World Records* for Barbara Blackburn's performance at a Dvorak keyboard is 487. The next edition will give her home town, correctly, as Everett, Washington.

Bibliographic notes

"The Bottleneck on your Typewriter", by Mary McKernan, *Alaskafest*, February, 1977. Interview with August Dvorak conducted before his final illness. Portrait photo and diagrams.

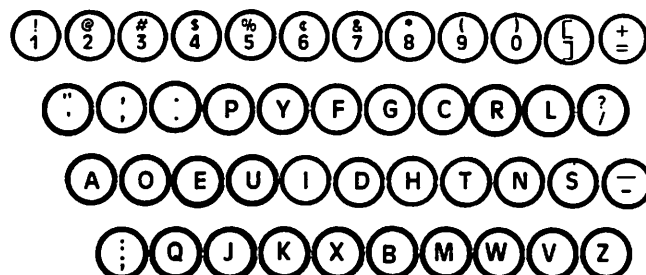
Changes in details of the Oregon-state-prescribed variant

Although, as we write, the returns from the latest letter ballot, a draft proposed American National standard arrangement for Dvorak variant keyboards are not yet in, it is evident from telephoned reports that the draft for a thirty-pair, three-row subset of characters will command either a consensus of the X4DSK working group, or at least a clear majority.

If so, then this draft will be submitted to the membership of the parent committee, American National Standards Committee X4, on office machines and supplies, for a 60-day ballot period. If it succeeds there, then it will be circulated for comment for a 90-day period, to a larger circle.

The State of Oregon Executive Department, however, is not subject to these delays and has already decided to conform to what was presented to that agency as an already established consensus of the office-machine-making industry.

The diagram below shows the new specification according to a telephone message to *Quick Strokes*



from C. C. Christensen, coordinator of the Dvorak program of the Oregon State Executive department.

In the diagram, the location of each character in the three front ranks of keys corresponds to the location in the current X4DSK draft proposed standard, from apostrophe to slash, from A to S, and from semicolon to Z.

The *Quick Strokes* suggestion for a name for this arrangement is Dvorak Variant Oregon Rational Alphanumeric Keyboard, DVORAK for short.

The set of characters and their arrangement are accepted by the Dvorak International Federation. It is reasonable to suppose that the forthcoming draft proposal, for 44 keys for correspondence, from X4DSK will be the same.

Queries on the Oregon State Executive Department specifications may be addressed to C. C. Christensen, 240 Cottage St., S.E., Salem, Oregon 97301. Queries on the work of X4DSK may be addressed to Philip Davis, chairman, in care of Maureen Foley, secretary, ANSC X4, CBEMA, 1828 L St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

Build thee more stately structures

A trained operator from the ranks of the Qwerties who has ten hours on classroom introduction to the Dvorak arrangement has more than the cornerstone of the new skill. A new manual, *Skill Building on the Dvorak Keyboard*, by Constance M. Palmer and Bradley J. Lessley (O.S.U. Bookstores, Corvallis), was designed primarily for retrainees in this situation. Price, \$2.40; publisher's Zip, 97331.

In Oregon, the rest of the retraining takes place in the workroom, in rather brief, rather frequent skill-building sessions on whatever Dvorak-arranged equipment is on hand. Sometimes it is the same unit on which the operator has been continuing to produce a script from a qwerty keyboard. A toggle relocates the characters.

Before and after the switch to production keying on Dvorak, *Skill Building* will surely help to raise the edifice of skill to higher levels.

West Coast business teachers get a briefing on Dvorak keying

Bradley Lessley, of Rancho Cordova, California, who is well known to readers of *Quick Strokes*, will lead a seminar on keyboard retraining, qwerty to Dvorak, as a meeting of the Oregon Business

Education Association at Ashland Senior High School, 201 S. Mountain Ave., Ashland, Oregon, on October 13, 1979.

Bibliographic notes

"UW Professor Emeritus Solves A 'Technological Disaster' ", by Mary McKernan, *Seattle Business*, Aug. 11, 1975, page 23 to 27. Concludes, "... the times are finally ripe for Dr. Dvorak." Emphasis is on the International Commercial Schools' contests from 1933 to 1941 and the 1946 navy report.

Untimely death takes Rico Heidelberg, modern pioneer in Dvorak keyboard training

The funeral of Rico Heidelberg, civil rights activist and Dvorak keyboard promoter, took place at the Schwandenholz Cemetery, Zurich, Switzerland, on August 29, 1979.

Mr. Heidelberg saw the two struggles as one and the same. For a student who can demonstrate competence at a keyboard, there is always a way to finance a typewriter to suit the skill.

From 1979 on until the end, wherever he was — in Newark, San Francisco, the District of Columbia, Baltimore, or Zurich, there was some activity around the Dvorak keyboard. It was by his own wish that his name has not, until now, appeared in *Quick Strokes* or in other periodicals.

Heidelberg was concerned with the rights and heritages of people of every tribe and nation, including the children of foreign workers in Switzerland and adjoining countries. He was active in Children International, Box 202, 8056 Zurich, Switzerland. The object of CI is to set up alternative schools where specific effort will be made to train the pupils in the language and culture of the parents' own country.

CI recognizes the typewriter as a valuable aid in language instruction, provided that the machine has an easy-to-learn arrangement of characters on the keyboard, and so, CI expects to vary the Dvorak arrangement according to the spelling of the needed languages and intends to use the variants in their classrooms.

Survivors are the widow, Emma Heidelberg-Schmid, and three children, Uhuru, Thai-Nia, and Hekima.

Yamada predicts easier access to vocational training for women in Japan

In a working note for the Information Processing Society of Japan, Professor Hisao Yamada remarks, "The only remaining ingredient to produce a Japanese typewriter in the Western sense is the input method. The input end is the major bottleneck for Japanese data processing in general and that is where everyone concerned is anxious to find a breakthrough solution."

The document, a proposed scope for an IPSJ research committee, is "IPSJ-RCIMJT Working Note No. 7905-1, May, 1979," nine pages, in English. Order from *Quick Strokes*, Box 643, West Sacramento, CA 95691. In photocopy, 50¢ a sheet. For delivery in California, add 27¢ sales tax.

Some paragraphs cast an interesting light on the role of women in Japanese industry and commerce.

Another document by Yamada and available from *Quick Strokes* is "IPSJ-RCIMJT Working Note No. 7907-1, July 1979, Learning Curves of Touch Typing for Japanese." Same source, same price as above.

Yamada does not expect the "abhorrence" of Japanese society for trade training for women to vanish. Instead, he expects that an easily learned, touch-typable, Dvorak-inspired keyboard will permit business correspondence to be typed out by specialists in that skill, many of whom will be women.

Affiliated with the Department of Information Science at the University of Tokyo, he is now at Stanford University. He can be reached, evenings, at 415-493-5618. He plans to make some calls, in person, in Sacramento and Salem before he returns home at the end of October.

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Subscriptions expire with the Winter issue of each volume.

Figures from the field indicate ample benefits from keyboard retraining, qwerty to Dvorak

A release from the Oregon Public Employees Retirement System, dated June 5, 1979, indicates strongly that keyboard retraining from the traditional q, w, e, r, t, y arrangement of characters is, indeed, well worth all costs.

Two sets of figures are cited, one for eight employees who had been with PERS and on Dvorak keyboards for all their keyboard work for about a year, and another for five employees who had left.

The scores that are listed under "timed writing" refer to performance on straight matter. Those under "production" refer to performance on copy consisting of the more complicated matter which operators deal with in the day's work of the PERS office, with date, address, salutation, body, and complimentary close. Timing was five minutes.

The qwerty scores are, of course, at least a year old; whereas, the Dvorak scores are current for the current employees.

If these operators had stayed on qwerty and taken skill-building drills on it, it is possible, and even likely, that they could have made higher scores at later dates. It is well known, however, that, on qwerty, such accretions are transitory. In general, then, the qwerty scores represent approximately the operators' peak performances, not likely to be surpassed as long as they stayed on qwerty. Such sample scores are thought to correlate closely with on-the-job input.

On Dvorak, however, experience has led us to expect higher scores as the Dvorak experience builds up. The accretion is faster if skill-building sessions keep on but is measurable even when the only practice is on input for mailing.

Among the current employees, the range of the qwerty scores is from 55, in words per minute, to 73, with an average of 63.9. The range of their production scores is narrower, from 33 to 40, with a 35.3 average.

On Dvorak, the timed-writing range is 56 to 81, with an average of 75 and a ratio of 1.174 to 1 to the qwerty scores. On Dvorak production, the range is from 36 to 63, for an average of 48.8 and a ratio to qwerty of 1.382 to 1.

In a carrying case and with the wanted office features — the new SCM Coronamatic 2500

For some time yet, a Dvorak-skilled operator in possession of an office-model typewriter with the right arrangement on the keyboard will be at some advantage over an equally skilled operator without one.

A new model, just announced this summer by the Smith-Corona Group and named the Coronamatic 2500, seems especially well suited to this application. The platen is long enough for the columnar tabulation in many offices, and the structure stands up well under heavy use.

Its carrying case does not have to be bought separately. Neither does the cased machine have to be carried by the handle on the case; small, collapsible, two-wheeled, one-handled carts (Travel Caddy, Cart-A-Bag) with a capacity up to sixty pounds are in stock in some department stores and discount houses.

Most dealers in SCM will price the 2500 below \$400. Delivery time, probably eight to twelve weeks.

Dvorak keying in a middle school; videotape shown in Salem

Shot in a classroom at the Carmel Middle School, Carmel, California, a videotape is available that shows how typewriters — with the right arrangement of characters — aids students in the sixth to eighth grades. The teacher, A. C. Kolb, and some of his students are the actors.

Lou Ellen Weld reports from Salem, Oregon, that the 14-minute tape is well made and that it does cast some light on the vocational application.

Sources: Monterey County Schools, Salinas, California; Dvorak International Federation, Box 13113, Salem 97309; Speedy Keyboard Ent. Inc., Box 643, West Sacramento, CA 95691.

If you subscribe to Quick Strokes, do you need DIF?

Yes, you do. *DIF* is the organ of the International Dvorak Federation and goes to members of it. The annual dues, which ought to be increased, are \$10. *DIF* can deal at length with larger-scale field experience than *Quick Strokes* can. You need both.

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